

GITMO Guardians

Aiming for Excellence

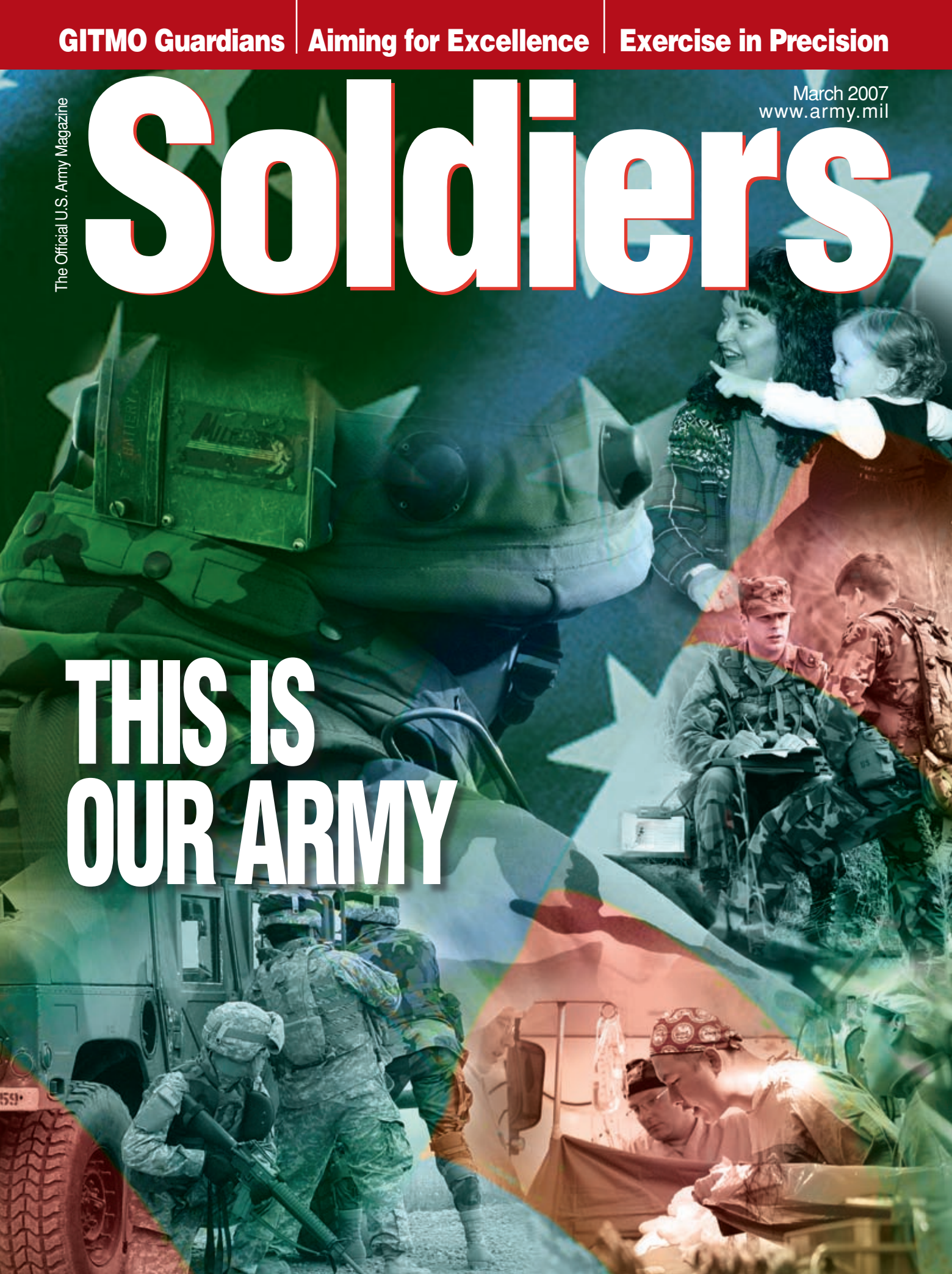
Exercise in Precision

The Official U.S. Army Magazine

March 2007
www.army.mil

Soldiers

**THIS IS
OUR ARMY**





Cover Story — Page 44
"This Is Our Army" 2007 uses
words and photos to illustrate
the lives of Soldiers and family
members Armywide.
— Montage by Paul Crank

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Soldiers | March 2007 | Vol

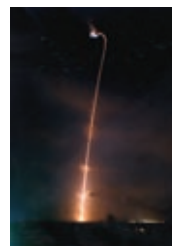


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OUR contributing writers and photographers deserve special recognition this month, as they account for the entire feature content of our March issue, providing glimpses of missions and activities happening Armywide. The issue begins at Camp America, Guantanamo, where SGT Jim Greenhill and SSG Jon Soucy provide insight into operations at the detention facility where members of the joint task force maintain custody of detainees of the war on terrorism.

Other features in this issue include Mark Hughes' and Jerri Mabray's story on the munitions makers of McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, Nell Drumheller's look at the Army's missile test site at Kwajalein Atoll and Argie Sarantinos-Perrin's examination of the Army's efforts to eliminate its chemical-weapons arsenal. In our only training story this month, SGT Mike Pryor describes the challenges facing 82nd Airborne Division artillerymen as they



race the clock to put rounds on target.

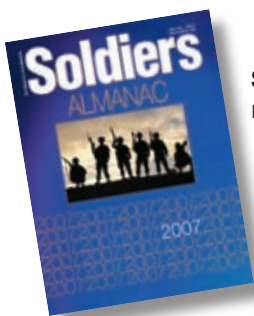
Finally, photographers from all the services contributed their images of Soldiers and family members around the

world in this year's "This Is Our Army" presentation. We hope you enjoy this expanded issue.

Gil High
Gil High
Editor in Chief

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Soldiers

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2007 Almanac

CONGRATULATIONS on another superb Almanac issue. I've already referred to it several times for information on units and rank insignia, and I'm sure I'll use it just as much in the coming year as I used all its predecessors.

Thanks for a great product.

SGT Anthony Lacharite
via e-mail

I REALLY enjoyed the article "Soldiers on the Border" in the January issue. I don't think most Americans, or even most Soldiers, realize what a large role Guard, Reserve and active-duty Soldiers are playing in the nationwide effort to secure our borders.

By the way, I'm glad you included Steve Harding's 1997 photo of the California Guard Soldier scanning the border with binoculars. I was in that unit at the time, and I remember when Mr. Harding spent time with us to do the story. Seeing our story in Soldiers magazine was a huge morale booster for us, because we'd been doing a very difficult job under very challenging conditions, and were getting no recognition at all.

Keep up the good work.

J.L. Klein
via e-mail

I JUST got my copy of the January Almanac, and I have to say I'm really enjoying it.

I especially like the photo on page 5 of two young Soldiers at Fort Jackson battling it out with what our Marine Corps friends call pugil sticks. I was a Marine for four years, and I well remember the teeth-jarring impact of one of those "padded" sticks when I let my guard down during a boot camp training session. It was great training, and I'm glad to see the Army has brought it back into the training syllabus.

John Svore
Los Angeles, Calif.

GREAT Almanac issue this year. I always look forward to the new uniform poster,

since it is a very useful "one-stop" guide on how to wear the uniform correctly. My younger Soldiers find it especially useful, and we always make sure that several copies are hung prominently throughout the company area.

One question: Can we look forward to seeing the Army Blue Uniform in next year's Almanac?

1SG John Peters
via e-mail

Thanks for the kind words. We always try to put into the Almanac those things that Soldiers can really use, and the uniform poster is something our readers keep asking for, so we'll keep providing an updated version every year. And yes, there's a good chance the Army Blue Uniform will appear in the 2008 Almanac — stay tuned!

December Calendar Kudos

I'VE made very good use of the December calendar since the minute it hit my desk. There's great information in the margins and the large photos are really striking.

One suggestion: Next year, maybe you could make each day's box a little larger, since it's kind of tough to get much into the boxes as small as they are now.

Overall, though, the calendar is a great effort (though I'm still wondering why you put St. Patrick's Day in February...).

1LT Justin Meyers
via e-mail

Fort Lewis Focus

THE November article on Fort Lewis was an interesting look at a great post, but as someone who both grew up there (Dad was Army) and has been stationed there (I've been active duty for 11 years and have managed to spend almost half that time at Lewis), I have to admit that I'm not thrilled about the planned expansion of the post.

One of the things I've always loved about Fort Lewis is that it's a major installation that feels like a small post.

It's fairly compact when compared with places like Fort Sill or Fort Riley, and it has always felt like a close-knit community.

I really hope that the expansion, and the arrival of new units and a lot more Soldiers and family members, won't ruin that "small-town" feel.

SFC John McCann
via e-mail

ENJOYED "Expanding Fort Lewis" in the November issue. I've done some time at Lewis, and enjoyed the post and the surrounding area.

I have to admit that I was glad to read about the renovation or replacement of a lot of the post's family housing units, though, since I always felt they were the only thing about Fort Lewis that wasn't up to par.

With new housing added to all the other things Fort Lewis already has going for it, the post will definitely be on my list of places I'd like to return to.

MSG John Anderson
via e-mail

Rolling On

The article "Keeping 'Em Rolling" in the November issue was a nice focus on some of the Soldiers who never seem to get much recognition — those who keep the supplies moving.

I'd like to see more of this kind of story, focusing on the "low-speed" but essential units and operations that don't usually make headlines.

SGT Mike Rupke
via e-mail

Soldiers values your opinion

To comment, keep your remarks to under 150 words, include your name, rank and address and send them to:

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◀ Germany

Mortarmen from the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, preparing for deployment, get some valuable live-fire training at the Joint Multinational Training Center in Grafenwöhr, Germany.

— Photo by Gary L. Kieffer

► Iraq

SPC Jennie Baez of the 47th Force Support Battalion provides security for Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, during an operation in Al Anbar province.

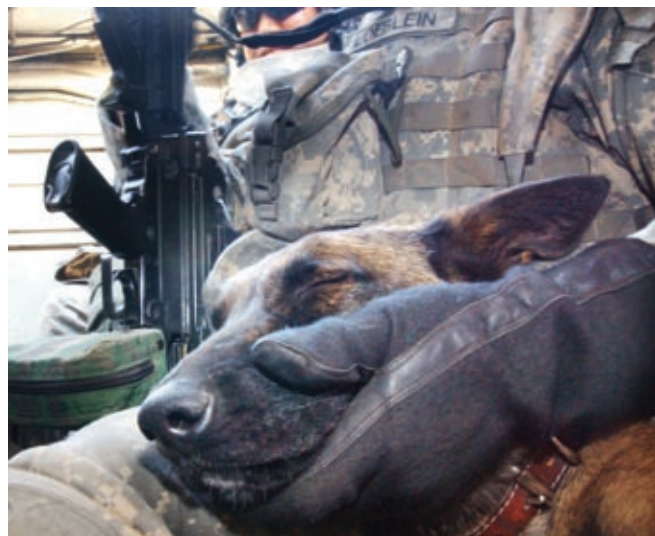
— Photo by LCpl. Clifton D. Sams, USMC



▲ Hawaii

SFC Eric Powell (*right*) uses the pants of his battle dress uniform as a flotation device during 2nd Brigade Combat Team water-survival training in Waimea Bay.

— Photo by SPC William Morden



▲ Iraq

Olivia, a military working dog, sleeps next to her handler inside a Stryker after a morning of conducting vehicle searches in Mosul.

— Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michele A. Desrochers, USAF

◀ Iraq

SGT Dane Phelps launches a Raven unmanned aerial vehicle during a joint U.S.-Iraqi cordon-and-search operation in the Hawijah district of Kirkuk province.

— Photo by SFC Michael Guillory



▲ Djibouti

SSG Ramon Munoz congratulates a Djiboutian soldier on completion of his four-week counterterrorism training in the city of Arta. Munoz is with the Guam Army National Guard's Company C, 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment, and is assigned to Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa

— Photo by CPO Philip A. Fortnam, USN



GITMO G

Story by **SGT Jim Greenhill** Photos by **SSG Jon Soucy**

AS the sun rises over the Caribbean, the Muslim call to prayer can be heard across Camp America, home to hundreds of members of Joint Task Force-Guantanamo — about 13 percent of them National Guard Soldiers — and more than 400 war-on-terror-related enemy combatants.

“The call to prayer has a beautiful ring to it,” said CPT Bryan Hughes of the Maryland Army National Guard’s 58th Brigade Combat Team. “It’s like being outside at night on an active-duty post when they play

taps. Five times a day you hear that call to prayer, and you know that the detainees are getting the opportunity to freely practice their chosen religion.”

JTF-GTMO’s mission includes the safe and humane care and custody of detainees; intelligence gathering; and caring for task force members.

Some detainees are former al-Qaida and Taliban leaders, said BG Edward Leacock, the Maryland Guard’s assistant adjutant general and JTF-GTMO’s deputy commander. Those detainees include people who have made forged documents so terrorists could travel from country to country.

Other detainees are said to be money launderers, recruiters, Osama

bin Laden’s bodyguards, bomb-makers and terrorist training-camp instructors.

“We’ve got the people who are supposed to be here, contrary to the beliefs of some that the JTF-GTMO is holding ‘shepherds and carpet salesmen,’” Leacock said.

While the National Guard has made a significant contribution to the JTF-GTMO mission since the camp was opened in 2002, Leacock said members of all services rotate through JTF-GTMO, serving for as little as 90 days and for as long as two years.

The Maryland Guard, however, currently fills most of the joint staff positions, from deputy commander on down, and Guard Soldiers serve as

SGT Jim Greenhill and SSG Jon Soucy are assigned to the National Guard Bureau Public Affairs Office.

Guardians

◀ Afternoon sunlight illuminates the overgrown entrance to Camp X-Ray, which was used briefly in 2002 and has since been replaced by a newer facility.

chaplains and provide external security for the detention facilities.

In civilian life the Guard Soldiers are doctors, lawyers, bankers and other professionals, and many work in law-enforcement or corrections, Leacock said.

“So they provide great insight into detention operations, among them correctly escorting people around the camps and dealing with various issues,” he said.

JTF-GTMO commander Rear Adm. Harry Harris said although detainees come from 24 different

▶ Maryland National Guard Soldiers conduct a mounted external perimeter security patrol of the detention facility.





▲ Soldiers augment the crew of a small, high-speed U.S. Coast Guard security boat that patrols the waterways around the base.

countries, about 60 percent are collectively from Afghanistan, Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. About 340 of the 770 detainees who have been held at GTMO have been released. And officials anticipate the transfer or release of another 100 detainees, some of whom have been held since 2002.

International law dictates that a nation at war can hold enemy combatants, Harris said. “We did it in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

“People debate whether or not these detainees should be tried, but it’s only a relatively small percentage of detainees who have allegedly committed war crimes who should be tried,” he said. “The rank-and-file detainee

here is simply an enemy combatant. He has no right to trial during the conduct of an ongoing war.”

Interrogators conduct interviews with about 125 detainees to glean information that’s then cross-referenced with other intelligence to provide field commanders, homeland law-enforcement authorities and allied security personnel with valuable information that can be used in the war on terror.

Such information has broadened understanding of such terrorist activities as recruiting, training, financing, planning, and command and control, Harris said.

“What’s available is information of a strategic quality,” said CPT Dan Byer, a JTF-GTMO spokesman.

Although the detainees do not have regular access to TV, radio or newspapers, news spreads quickly in

the detention camps. For example, detainees were celebrating within minutes of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s resignation in November, according to the detention facility’s deputy commander.

During recreation time, detainees play basketball or soccer, or use exercise bicycles or treadmills. They read from a growing library of thousands of books in a dozen languages. They choose from meals that meet religious requirements and varied dietary needs. They are cared for by 100 medical personnel in a 20-bed facility similar to an American forward-deployed field hospital.

Pre-existing medical conditions — often undiagnosed and untreated prior to detention — have been addressed. Detainees have been fitted with prostheses for battlefield injuries



“You’re doing doctoral-level work here,” said LTG H. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, speaking to JTF-GTMO members during a November visit.

► Empty cells stand ready for use. Such cells — each of which measures roughly 10 feet by 12 feet — are home to many of the detainees. Those who follow camp rules may move on to communal cells.

and given physical therapy. More than 300 operations have been performed, including hemorrhoid surgeries, hernia repairs and an appendectomy. Every-one over 50 was offered a colonoscopy to detect colon cancer. One detainee has had a cancerous tumor removed. Diabetes, high cholesterol, heart disease and blood-pressure issues have been addressed, camp officials said.

The nature of the medical care has changed from treatment of the acute conditions many detainees arrived with to the preventive health measures familiar to many Americans.

For four months in 2002 the detainees were held at austere Camp X-Ray, which was originally built



because of an influx of Haitian refugees in the 1990s. The camp has been closed for four years. “It’s literally overgrown,” Leacock said. Yet, pictures of Camp X-Ray still frequently accompany media coverage of JTF-GTMO.

Detainees were moved across the naval station to Camp Delta, which is actually a series of four camps. Camps 1 through 3 are maximum-security

sites. Camp 4 is a communal living facility where up to 10 detainees share quarters — a reward for complying with detention-facility rules and cooperating with interrogators.

The newest facilities are Camp

▼ A Soldier guards a detainee spending time in the exercise yard outside Camp 5. One of six camps in the detention center, Camp 5 houses the most hostile detainees.





SFC Alberto Betancourt

◀ A Soldier of the 988th MP Co. patrols the inside perimeter of the original interrogation facility in 2002. It has since been replaced by a newer facility.

5 and Camp 6, both modeled after domestic U.S. penal institutions. These air-conditioned buildings improve detainees' living conditions and allow for improved security.

"Everybody starts off at 'compliant,'" said the deputy commander of the joint detention group, a National Guard lieutenant colonel. "If you break a camp rule or fail to follow the guards' instructions, you become a 'noncompliant' detainee, in which case you lose what are considered comfort items, like a thicker mattress, tan uniform, extra shoes and playing cards. Regardless of whether they're compliant or noncompliant, they still keep copies of the Koran."

Also in consideration of detainees' religion, arrows pointing east toward Mecca are painted in every cell, so detainees know which way to face when they pray.

No detainee is held in solitary confinement. No one is tortured. Detainees are always able to communicate with other detainees, Leacock said.

And, in compliance with the Third Geneva Convention — displayed prominently in multiple languages throughout the camps — detainees are

protected from visitors' curiosity. In Camp 4, they abandon the recreation yard and return to their rooms until visitors are gone.

"These detainees have their political, religious and military leaders," the lieutenant colonel added. "They have their messengers. They have their memorizers; they have people who memorize guards' names. They have their shock troops who will throw a 'cocktail' of feces, urine, vomit, blood, whatever, in order to get moved to a different block so they can communicate, and they have the people who are the mouthpieces who will speak for the leaders. They're very organized. They've been here a long time."

Weapons seized from detainees include a billy club fashioned from MRE wrappers, an intricate trash-bag garrote and a variety of crude shanks.

The task force attempts to make the JTF-GTMO facility the most transparent detention facility in the world, Leacock said. "We're here to show the world we're doing the right things for the right reasons."

Still struggling to correct the impressions created by Camp X-Ray, the task force continues to deal with

consequences of the "Manchester Document," seized in England in 2000. "It was basically their how-to-be-a-terrorist field manual," Leacock said. Topics included the correct use of poisons, how to conduct assassinations and guidance on traveling incognito.

A key chapter advises readers what to do if detained, Leacock said. The advice includes making accusations of torture, using lawyers to communicate and gathering information about camp operations. The JTF attempts to correct the misconceptions created by released detainees who use misinformation tactics found in the "Manchester Document."

To a visitor familiar with state prisons in the United States, both Camp 5 and Camp 6 are superior to the facilities used to house American criminals. The other camps are more like county jails, said the Army NCO in charge of Camp 5.

Detention of enemy combatants differs from the imprisonment of criminal inmates, in that enemy combatants are not being punished and no one is trying to reform them.

"This is not a penal colony," Byer said. "They are not serving time for the things they have done. We have no desire to focus on rehabilitating war

▶ Outside cells at the former Camp X-Ray stand abandoned. Newer facilities provide safe and humane care of detainees.



"This is not a penal colony. They are not serving time for things they have done. We have no desire to focus on rehabilitating war criminals ... This is not a correctional facility."

► The original Camp X-Ray — seen here in a photograph from 2002 — was very basic, and Soldiers assigned to it lived in a tactical environment.

SFC Alberto Belancourt



criminals or someone that fights for their country. This is not a correctional facility.”

GTMO’s isolation ensures force protection, decreases the odds of attack or escape, and protects the detainees from harassment. In dry seasons, GTMO looks like Arizona by the sea; in wet seasons, like South Florida with hills. The 45-square-mile naval station has been under American control since 1898, and straddles both sides of Guantanamo Bay.

Since 2002 the base’s population has climbed from about 2,300 to some 7,500. Almost every naval station building sports a fresh coat of paint, and many have been renovated. American taxpayers have invested \$100 million in the detainee mission alone, JTF-GTMO officials said.

With the construction of new barracks, service members now live in four-person rooms. Harris has moved aggressively to improve living condi-

tions, institute family visits; and enhance morale, welfare and recreation.

Although they are not being shot at, JTF-GTMO troops say their job has unique stresses.

“We’re toe to toe, eyeball to eyeball with detainees on a daily basis,” Leacock said. “The detainees threaten to kill us. They threaten that if they ever get out they’ll track down our families and kill them. They use every possible racial slur to try to drive a

wedge between members of the guard force.”

Other challenges of the unaccompanied deployment include the world’s intense scrutiny, the rigorous operational security, detainee assaults on guards, the heat and humely dealing with detainees who have such infectious diseases as hepatitis.

“You’re doing doctoral-level work here,” said LTG H. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, speaking to JTF-GTMO members during a November visit. “You think I’m kidding? This is tough stuff. You say more about what’s right about America





▲ When off duty, many service members spend time scuba diving, snorkeling or at Windmill Beach, where volleyball is a popular pastime.

just by being you and doing what you do every day. You are this nation's best ambassadors to these detainees. If you think you're not changing them at all, you're kidding yourself, and if they think they're going to take down a way of life that grows people like you, who are capable of doing what you are doing, then they're kidding themselves."

On off-duty hours, troopers take advantage of GTMO's world-class scuba diving. They play volleyball on Windmill Beach; have cookouts; and hike or run in the naval station's rolling hills. Additionally, they can work out at one of the gyms or watch free

movies under the night sky.

"I'm glad to be here," said the deputy commander of the detention facilities, the National Guard lieutenant colonel. "It's not somewhere that I or many folks ever expected to wind up for a year, but now that I've been here, I'll walk away having contributed and having learned a lot, so that as we move forward I'll know even more clearly why we're here and that what we're doing is protecting American values and society.

"It's not a war against Islam. There are some extremists here, but I have a much better appreciation for Islam and how it relates to Christianity and our Judeo-Christian tradition," he added.

"We'll be here as long as the mission requires," Leacock said. "It's U.S. policy that we want to keep the

detainees here no longer than absolutely necessary. Some of these people will be here for a long while because of the threat they pose to the United States or our allies, or because of the information we believe they have in their heads.

"The American people and all the service members who have not been here need to understand that we are doing an extremely professional job down here" Leacock added. "We are doing it legally. We are doing it professionally, and American moms and dads can be proud of their sons and daughters for the great work they're doing here."

"What we can't forget," said Byer, "is that these are dangerous men, and our goal is to care for these dangerous men safely and humanely." 🇺🇸



"Some of these people will be here a long while because of the threat they pose to the United States or our allies, or because of the information we believe they have in their heads."

▼ A Soldier mans a guard tower overlooking the detention facility.





McAlester Army Ammunition Plant is the nation's premier producer of bombs, and its largest munitions storage and shipping center.

Story by Mark Hughes Photos by Jerri Mabray

TUCKED away in the middle of the rolling hills of eastern Oklahoma is McAlester Army Ammunition Plant — the Defense Department's premier producer of bombs and the nation's largest facility for storing and shipping munitions.

Many of the ammunition plant's 1,300 civilian employees are former or retired military members, and many have children or grandchildren serving in the military. Their support of today's warfighters could not be any more enthusiastic.

"I've been in combat, and have

Mark Hughes and Jerri Mabray work in the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant Public Affairs Office.

turned around to pick up ordnance and found there's nothing there. That's not a good feeling," said 61-year-old Vietnam veteran Bob Dean, a forklift operator at MCAAP.

"It's good to know that someone is 100-percent behind you, and that's what I want the Soldiers to know about the employees at McAlester Army Ammunition Plant," he said.

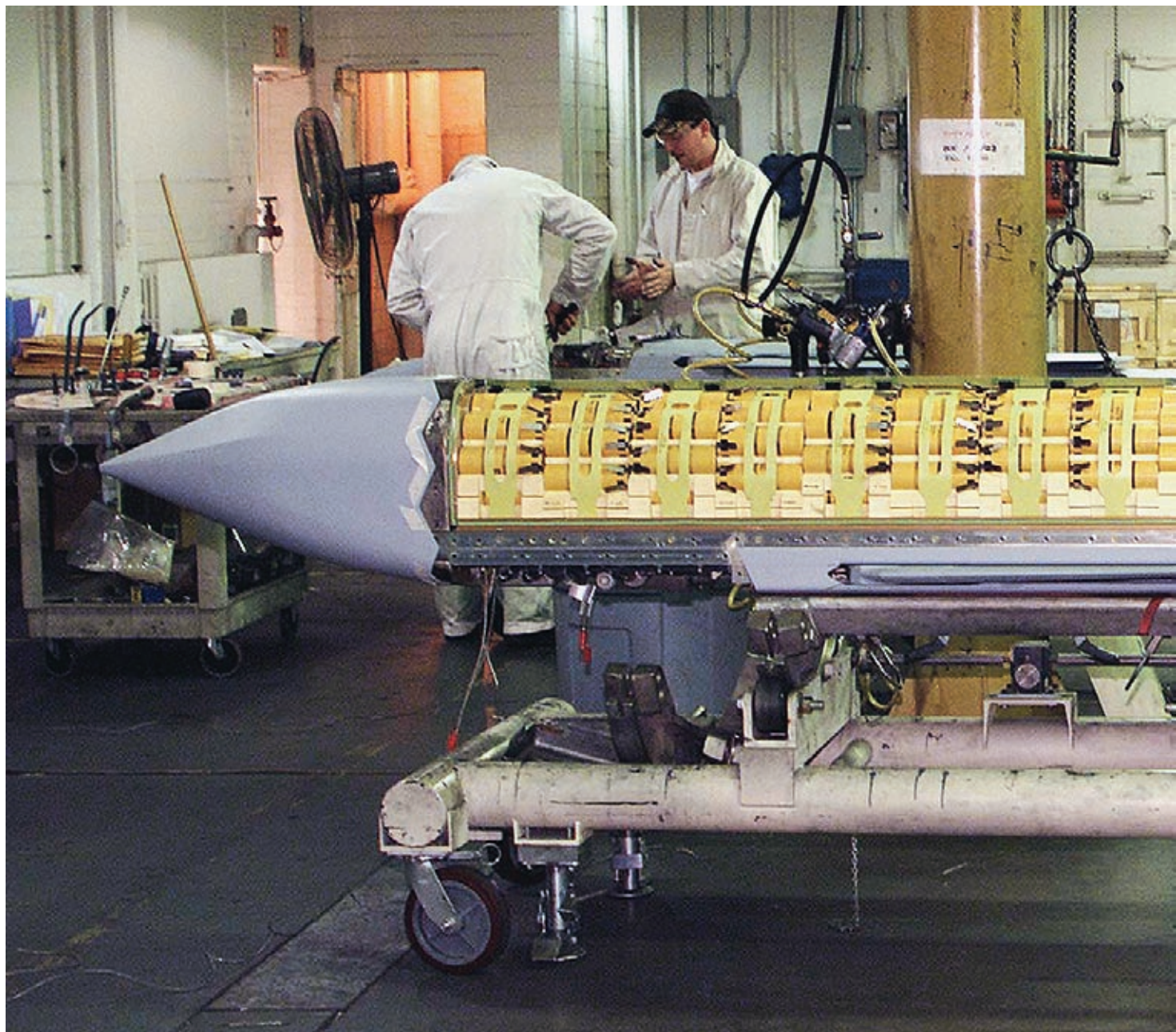
"The ammunition plant exists solely for the benefit of the warfighters," said plant commander COL Gary B. Carney. "Everything we do is focused on quality. We want to reassure the warfighters that if ordnance comes from McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, they've got the best-quality



▲ Wearing a safety hood, a MCAAP worker pours TNT into a meltout kettle. The process allows the plant to reuse explosives taken from older munitions.

◀ Explosives workers Garret Rose (*left*) and Wes Brines add an explosive mix into two BLU-121 2,000-pound bombs.

WARFIGHTERS' MUNITIONS MAKER



▲ Workers assemble the tail end of a Joint Stand Off Weapon, which since 1999 has been produced in partnership with Raytheon.

munitions America can produce.”

Army veteran Joe Morrison, an explosive operator at the plant, said his work at the production line now has even more meaning.

“My work is not only for the warfighter, but for something much more personal,” he said. “My son Tim is assigned to the 1st Infantry Division and recently deployed to Iraq.”

MCAAP produces bombs weighing 500, 1,000, 2,000, 5,000 and

21,000 pounds. Of those bombs, the 2,000 and 5,000 pounders also come as “bunker-buster” penetrators. In addition to the explosive-filled bombs, the plant also produces inert practice bombs.

As of September 2006 the Air Force had dropped 18,737 bombs in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

While the Air Force was making good use of the ammunition plant’s products, McAlester actively replenished its stockpile in fiscal 2005 with almost 24,000 explosive bombs and more than 74,000 inert bombs.

MCAAP also produces other munitions, ranging from the 5-inch 54-cal. cartridge case to the Joint Stand Off Weapon. The MCAAP mission also includes ammunition and missile renovation, maintenance and demilitarization.

In 1999 the plant teamed up with the Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center in Picatinny, N.J., to perfect a process that melts out TNT from obsolete 105mm and 8-inch projectiles. The result is that MCAAP has melted out and reused more than 18 million pounds of TNT in new bombs, not only protecting the envi-



ronment by recycling, but also saving taxpayers' money. A similar process was developed to reclaim specification-grade tritonal, which is a mix of TNT and aluminum powder. More than 4 million pounds of tritonal have been reclaimed since 1999.

To ensure quality, MCAAP employees use state-of-the-art digital X-ray technology and chemical laboratory equipment.

"We X-ray bombs to verify that the explosive fill has no quality defects that would prevent the bomb from functioning as designed," said quality-assurance specialist Lisa Everett. "The

last thing we want is for one of our products to malfunction in combat."

Items that can be inspected by the X-ray range in size from a small primer up to a 5,000-pound penetrator bomb.

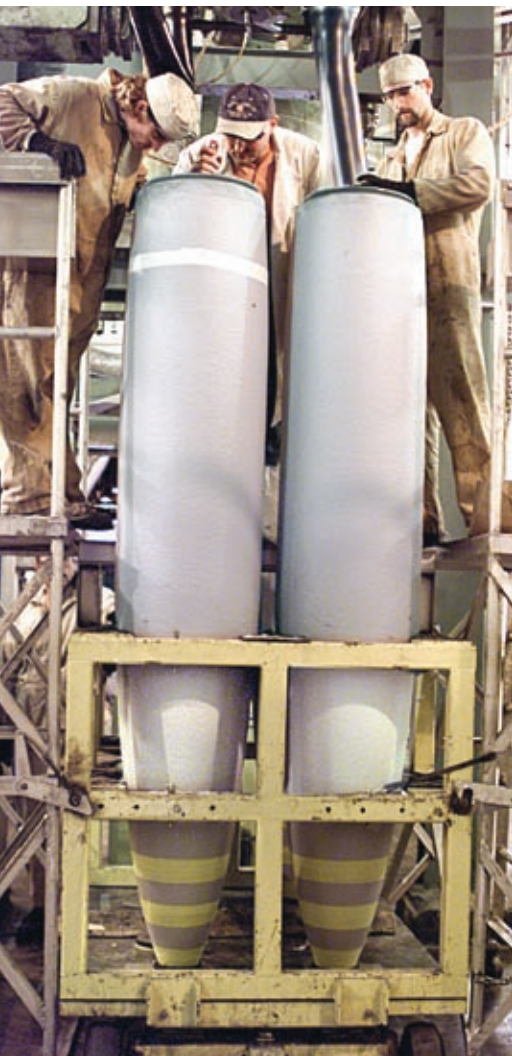
"The X-ray facility ensures the bombs are properly filled, while the explosives lab checks to ensure the explosive material meets specifications in composition, hardness, density and percentage of moisture," said Brad Black, chief of the Non-destructive Test Division.

The plant has a near-perfect record when it comes to meeting required

To ensure quality, MCAAP employees use state-of-the-art digital X-ray technology and chemical laboratory equipment.

► Pallets of BLU-111 500-pound bombs stand ready for shipment to Air Force bases around the world.

▼ Workers inspect just-filled 2,000-pound Mk. 84 bombs.



delivery dates. MCAAP stores and delivers just about any ammunition a Soldier, Sailor, Airman or Marine requires; from 5.56mm rifle rounds to various projectiles, mortars, grenades, rockets, missiles and bombs.

And the Oklahoma plant has shipped more than 41,702 tons of assorted munitions in direct support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

When the munitions and bombs arrive downrange, they usually arrive



in containers called "milvans," each of which can hold up to 16 tons of ammunition. Inside the milvans, munitions are banded to wooden pallets and braced by wood.

Wood pallets are used to ship everything except bombs, according to James Franks, director of the Logistics Operations Division. MCAAP also produces the wooden pallets.

Cecil Sanders, a MCAAP shipping supervisor, said the pallets are not just for internal use — up to 60,000 are made each year for other customers.

In order to ship wooden pallets overseas, the ammunition plant is required to heat treat the pallets for 30 minutes, to destroy insects that may inhabit the wood. The Defense Department only owns four such heat chambers, two of which are located at MCAAP.

The plant also fabricates about 6,000 metal pallets a year, which are specially designed to hold bombs of all shapes and sizes.

Most munitions are moved by truck and railcar. To assure safe passage of the cargo over MCAAP's 200-plus miles of track, the installation has developed a unique railroad-maintenance capability within the Army. MCAAP is considered to be the Army's center of expertise when

it comes to rail-line repair. MCAAP even constructed a 1,400-foot railroad spur to hold the space shuttle booster rockets for NASA.

As MCAAP looked for additional ways to support America's service members, it partnered with the best of the nation's defense industries to produce the newest and best products.

The Boeing Co. is among the first of a dozen or so major defense contractors with whom MCAAP has partnered. Since 1994 this innovative partnership has produced more than 2,000 warheads for ship-launched Harpoon missiles.

A year later MCAAP teamed up with Texas Instruments and later Raytheon to produce the High Speed Anti Radiation Missile. In 1999 they again joined forces to produce the Joint Stand Off Weapon, which continues to be used today.

In September 2006 MCAAP began producing one of Raytheon's latest technical wonders, the 155mm Excalibur precision-guided projectile, which will greatly increase the lethality of traditional projectiles currently being used by the Army and Marine Corps.

► Guided by two Soldiers, a Super Stacker vehicle operated by a MCAAP employee moves a military van into position in the outload yard.



“These production rounds put us closer to providing our Soldiers with a cannon-launched, precision projectile to meet the needs of the rapidly evolving operational environment,” said Raymond Sicignano, U.S. Army deputy product manager for Excalibur.

McAlester Army Ammunition Plant has a long history of supporting the joint services. The plant opened in 1943 as the McAlester Naval Ammunition Depot and transferred to the

Army in 1977. Located just south of McAlester, Okla., it covers 45,000 acres.

When it comes to supporting the warfighter, McAlester Army Ammunition Plant is a multi-mission Army installation serving our joint forces and allies.

“I’m proud of the dedicated workers at McAlester Army Ammunition Plant and their continuous commitment to producing high-quality muni-



▲ A worker moves a pallet of 155mm artillery shells onto a roll-on, roll-off container platform for shipment.

tions for all of the military services. Through partnerships with industry, MCAAP is able to meet the needs of our warfighters with superior products that are efficient and timely,” said LTG William E. Mortensen, deputy commanding general of U.S. Army Materiel Command. 🇺🇸





A New Sentinel for Consumer Complaints

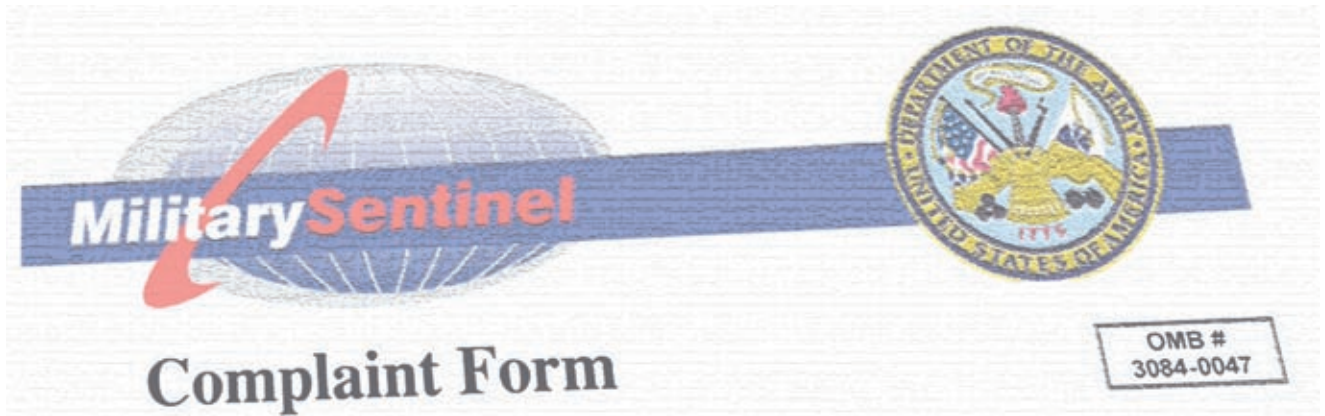
Legal-assistance clients often ask where they may file complaints with a central government agency concerning fraudulent consumer practices by individuals or businesses.

The consumer problems that give rise to this question have a major impact upon all Soldiers, their family members and civilian employees, since many of the disputes are with culprits outside the state or country in which the consumer is serving or residing.

Until recently, most such complaints were filed with local consumer-protection agencies, state

attorneys general or local better business bureaus. Since the majority of legal service clients at military installations worldwide are transient military personnel with families having disputes with out-of-state businesses or companies, filing a complaint with local authorities often does not provide any action or relief. Additionally, local complaints are not publicized beyond a limited geographic area, meaning that the fraudulent conduct might go unnoticed elsewhere. And, finally, the frequent mobility of military personnel and their families often frustrates action on their behalf by local agencies and courts.

Steven Chucala is chief of client services in the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at Fort Belvoir, Va.



Now there is a new way for military members, their families and civilian employees of the military to make consumer complaints — through the Web site known as Military Sentinel.

Established by the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Defense, Military Sentinel is the first online consumer complaint database specifically tailored for the unique needs of the military community. It is accessible worldwide 24 hours each day.

Located at www.consumer.gov/military, Military Sentinel is a convenient way to communicate consumer-fraud complaints to law-enforcement officials. The system facilitates the identification of criminal patterns and individuals by more than 550 members of both civilian and military enforcement agencies in the United States, Australia and Canada. The program also accepts identity-theft complaints, which are entered into the federal government's central database for such crimes.

Military Sentinel also assists policymakers at both the Department of Defense and the Federal Trade Commis-

sion to collect and analyze service-related information that is not otherwise available. It also provides information and is an educational tool for the military community against criminals that target military personnel and their families.

Military Sentinel has three essential features. First, it offers members of the military community a free, quick and easy way to file complaints. Second, it gives DOD and law-enforcement agencies secure access to

consumer complaints, installation by installation. Third, it provides military members, their families and civilian employees with immediate access to the FTC's educational information.

Legal-assistance attorneys encourage members of the military community to use this program. However, consumers should take care not to mistake genuine business disputes (such as warranty problems) as fraud that should be reported to the Military Sentinel.

As always, when in doubt, consult an attorney.

24 / 7

Know the Law!



Kwajalein Aiming for E

Story by Nell M. Drumheller

► Kwajalein, home of the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site, is located in the Marshall Islands about halfway between Hawaii and Australia.

Nell Drumheller

An aerial photograph of Kwajalein Atoll, showing a long, narrow island with a large runway, various buildings, and a lagoon. The island is surrounded by deep blue water with a white sandy beach. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

Excellence

U.S. Army Kwajalein Atoll and the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site in the Marshall Islands have been an integral part of ballistic-missile testing and space operations since 1966.

“USAKA and the Reagan Test Site are vital parts of ballistic-missile defense and space programs,” said COL Stevenson Reed. The USAKA commander is one of 20 Soldiers assigned to the Army installation, along with about 50 Department of the Army civilians, and some 3,000 American and Marshallese contract employees.

Nell Drumheller is the editor of the Kwajalein “Hourglass.”



Steve Harding

◀ Technicians, Soldiers and scientists monitor a test in the main RTC control center. The site's technical staff is drawn from military, civil service and contractor agencies.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands, or RMI, is made up of two archipelagic island chains of 29 atolls, each with many small islets, and five single islands in the North Pacific Ocean, about halfway between Honolulu and Australia and about 550 miles from the equator.

Under a U.S.-RMI agreement, USAKA/RTS uses 11 islands. Although the Army manages the overall installation, it's operated by prime contractor Kwajalein Range Services, which provides integrated range engineering, logistics and community-services support to the Army.

"In our engineering role, KRS operates and maintains some of the world's largest and most sophisticated radars and other sensors to provide space surveillance, ballistic-missile defense test missions, and launch operations for various U.S. government and nongovernmental customers," said KRS president John Pickler.

Important Mission, Ideal Location

"Kwajalein Atoll is located relatively close to the equator, which



makes it an ideal space-launch location,” Reed said. “We can launch larger payloads into near-earth or geosynchronous orbits using less energy. In respect to tracking launches from other geographical areas, our location is ideally suited for coverage, because these launches must cross the equator

➤ One of four massive radars on Roi-Namur island — about 50 miles north of Kwajalein — the ALTAIR tracks foreign launches and objects in deep space.

▼ The arrival over the impact area of vehicles launched in the United States is always dramatic. Here, two “Glory Trip” re-entry vehicles streak across the sky above Roi-Namur.





at some point.”

A geosynchronous orbit means the object is orbiting the Earth at the exact speed the Earth is rotating.

LTC Justin Hirniak, the range commander, explained what the Army is doing in the Marshall Islands.

“Our mission is to provide space-operations support to the warfighters, and to perform critical tests and evaluations for the Department of Defense’s space and missile-defense community,” Hirniak said.

“The RTS possesses the most sophisticated radar suite in the world,” he added. “Personnel here perform a multitude of operational and test missions that directly support the military services and enhance future DOD technology initiatives. The range’s capability is a critical defense asset for current operations and future initiatives.”

Not all of USAKA’s human and mechanical assets are located on the island of Kwajalein. The island of Roi-Namur, at the north end of the atoll, is the home of Space Surveil-

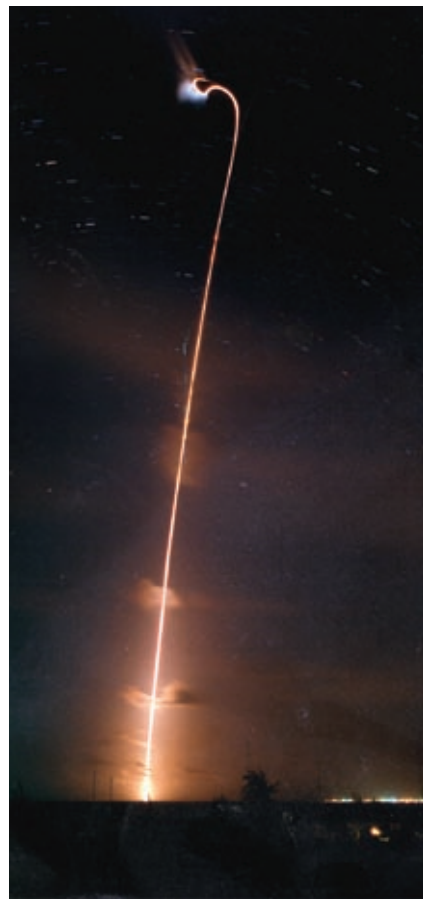
▲ During a typical missile-intercept test, the target vehicle is fired from another location and, a short time later, the intercept vehicle is launched (as seen here) from Meck Island.

► In this time-lapse image a “kill” vehicle lifts off from its launchpad, streaks into the sky and intercepts an incoming target launched from thousands of miles away.

lance Operations. The center’s mission is detecting, tracking, identifying and cataloging all man-made objects orbiting Earth, and it is one of very few sites capable of radar deep-space tracking, all of which comprise a space-surveillance network.

“Other sites can’t do what we do, because of our prime location and instrumentation,” said Herb Schmidt, KRS Space Surveillance Department leader. “We provide 24/7, all-weather coverage of roughly one-third the Earth’s geosynchronous belt that is unseen by other network radar elements. We’re the largest contributor of radar deep-space observations.”

Schmidt’s team executes deep-space surveillance activities around



► Despite the high-tech nature of the work done on Kwajalein, the island's atmosphere is laid-back and informal. There are no privately owned vehicles on the island, so residents get around on bicycles.

the clock with the help of a suite of four massive, state-of-the-art radars.

"At Reagan Test Site we continually strive to ensure that our wide array of sophisticated instrumentation and sensors become pathfinders for DOD," Hirniak said. "Major upgrades and new technologies to achieve remote operations and a net-centric architecture are two primary drivers that we have focused on over the last several years."

A plan to bring fiber optics to USAKA should be a "carrot" for enticing more customers. "Fiber optics will open a huge array of possibilities for the community," said Corinne Brown,

USAKA information management director and information assurance manager.

The fiber-optic cable — which will be approximately the circumference of a tennis ball — will reach Kwajalein from Guam, a distance of about 1,900 miles. The fiber will be a dedicated strand, which will ensure access security, and at some points along its route the cable may lie as deep as 30,000 feet below the sea.

Other Customers

Given RTS's unique capabilities, it's no wonder other military organizations frequently visit Kwajalein. Among the more recent visitors were members of a Marine Corps air-defense battery, who traveled from Okinawa to RTS's Meck Island site for a

► Members of a Marine Corps air-defense unit fire a Stinger missile from Meck island. The Marines are among the RTS's many non-Army users.





▲ Technicians remove protective coverings from an intercept vehicle before a test launch from Meck. The island, which is about 25 miles northeast of Kwajalein, has several launch pads and control centers.

few days of live-fire training.

“Live-fire training is vitally important,” said USMC Maj. Gen. George J. Trautman III, commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing in Iwakuni, Japan. Over the course of two days’ training the Marines fired 48 surface-to-air Stinger missiles. The Marines don’t often have the opportunity to train live, and usually have to train in simulators. To maintain their weapons qualifications, they must shoot live once every three years.

And there are other customers as well, Hirniak said.

“We provide range support to programs throughout DOD. Long-term support is provided to the Missile Defense Agency, U.S. Strategic Command, the Air Force, NASA, and other customers, including a commercial space corporation — Space X

— which is participating in a project sponsored by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency,” he said.

“We continually ensure our capabilities are known throughout the DOD test and space community through conferences, symposiums and briefings. The underwater fiber-optic cable will enable us to increase our capability, which in turn will expand our ability to efficiently resource additional needs and requirements,” Hirniak said.

A Team Effort

Officials at all levels agreed that running RTS is a team effort, and that contractor employees are key members of that team.

“One parent company is Lockheed Martin, a world leader in missile and space technology,” Pickler said. “Bechtel, the other parent company, is one of the world’s premier engineer-

ing, construction, and project-management organizations.

Two other contractors provide base operations and flight operations. “We have the capability to get the job done right, on time and within budget,” he said.

“We furnish the logistics functions of marine and aviation operations, public works, automotive maintenance and repair, and utilities that are necessary to support the equivalent of a small American town in a remote Pacific island location,” Pickler said. “In addition, our community-support services focus on maintaining a high quality of life for our community.

“We are a diverse and talented group, approximately one-half of





which is drawn from our local Marshallese community,” he said. “We are very proud of our important role on this military installation, and we are partnered with USAKA/RTS to develop and maintain a program of continuous improvement in both range operations and in the quality of life on Kwajalein.”

Marshallese workers are also important to RTS’s success, as is the continuing support of the RMI government, Reed said.

“The RMI has been, and continues to be, a cooperative partner in our endeavor to make USAKA/RTS a ready and relevant installation,” he said. “We appreciate and value the support

the RMI gives to our collective defense, and their unwavering support in the cause of freedom and democracy.”

A Bright Future

“I see the future of our community as extremely promising in the next one to five years,” Hirniak said. “U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command and USAKA/RTS have fought hard to provide the vision, strategy and resources that will bring our range to a pre-eminent position in the world of space operations.

“With the opportunity to expand our growing customer base, both governmental and nongovernmental, we will be able to modernize and improve

▲ Protected from the pounding of the open sea, Kwajalein’s northern shore offers calm beaches and a harbor that is home to several Army vessels and a fleet of recreational boats. In their off-duty time, residents enjoy some of the world’s best diving and sailing.

our range facilities, infrastructure, and support services to the point that Kwajalein will become the location of choice for space operations of all types,” he added.

“I see us continuing to be the Army’s premier space operation and full-spectrum missile testing activity,” Reed said. “Through transformation, we’ll provide increasingly relevant products and net-centric capabilities to support combatant commanders.”



SG Rodel Yadao stood next to a 105mm howitzer that was wrapped tightly in layers of cardboard cushioning and half-buried in the sand. Only minutes before, the 4,600-pound weapon had been dropped hundreds of feet from a moving airplane.

Yadao, a gunnery sergeant with the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, felt for the stopwatch hanging from his neck. Then he swiveled around to the tree line where another aircraft was approaching. Inside the plane were dozens of artillerymen from

SGT Mike Pryor is assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office.

A photograph of several soldiers in camouflage uniforms and helmets standing in a dry, sandy field. One soldier in the foreground is holding a large green object, possibly a rocket or a large container. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

Exercise in

Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 319th Field Artillery Regiment.

Yadao's eyes followed the plane as it passed over the drop zone, filling the sky behind it with parachutes. When the last jumper had left the aircraft, Yadao started his stopwatch. The clock was running. B Btry. now had 15 minutes to put the howitzer into operation and send a round downrange.

Speed and proper execution were the goals during a recent heavy-drop exercise on Sicily Drop Zone at Fort Bragg, N.C.

The unit's standard for field exercises is to have an airdropped howitzer calibrated, positioned and ready to fire within 15 minutes during the day and 25 minutes at night. That standard is so difficult to achieve that it rarely is, said Yadao.

Speed and proper execution were the goals during a recent exercise on Fort Bragg's Sicily Drop Zone.

◀ Soldiers of Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 319th Field Artillery Regiment, prepare to send rounds downrange soon after they and their 105mm howitzer landed on Sicily Drop Zone.

Precision

Story and Photos by SGT Mike Pryor



“Everything has to be perfect,” he said.

During the heavy drop SGT Billy Davison, a howitzer section chief, was the first paratrooper to reach the gun. He immediately began checking for damage and working to unload it.

No matter who gets there first, that person has to be ready to spring into action, Davison said.

“The first man is in charge until a noncommissioned officer shows up. That’s why we’re all supposed to know one job up and every job below our own,” he said.

As Davison went to work cutting away the retaining straps on the howitzer, he was quickly joined by other Soldiers, who quickly tore apart the honeycomb cushioning on the weapon.

In no time they had unwrapped the howitzer. Next they had to place it on the firing platform. Shouting and grunting, they dug in their feet and pushed the two-ton gun into place.

The next step was to prepare the gun to be fired. This was mainly the job of the gunner. He had to go through a precise series of checks known as “laying procedures,” to ensure the weapon was on the proper

firing azimuth. As the Soldiers completed each procedure, a section chief observed their actions.

“The gunner has certain steps that he’s got to take to put that gun in order, and the chief has to verify that the gunner is doing everything properly,” Yadao said.

In another few minutes the gun team was able to call “in order,” meaning they were ready for a fire mission. Yadao glanced down at his stopwatch: 18 minutes, 18 seconds. They weren’t going to meet the time standard, but they were still working fast.

About 25 meters behind the howitzer, the fire-direction center team was

▲ Btry. B fire-direction center commander 2LT Larry Pitts (*center*) maintains communications with forward observers while team members do calculations for a fire mission.

hard at work. Led by 2LT Larry Pitts, the team was huddled together with papers, handheld computers, charts and slide rulers like a bunch of high school kids at a late-night geometry study session.

Now that the howitzer was ready for a fire mission, the FDC team had to get a target from the forward observers. Once the observers produced a grid, the FDC team calculated a range deflection from their computers and

► Artillerymen jump from a C-17 Globemaster II over Sicily Drop Zone. Members of Btry. B had just 15 minutes following the last jumper’s exit to get their gun in operation.



“If we’re not on top of our game, three things are going to happen — we’ll kill friendly forces, cause unnecessary collateral damage and won’t accomplish our mission.”

charts. Then they sent the information to the gun team.


Imagine trying to do complex math in the middle of a battle while being timed. Those were the conditions the FDC team was operating in. But the team couldn’t let the pressure get to them, said Pitts.

“If we’re not on top of our game, three things are going to happen — we’ll kill friendly forces, cause unnecessary collateral damage and won’t accomplish our mission,” he said.

At 22:29 the FDC sent the gun team its fire mission. Twenty seconds later, the howitzer reported “laid,” meaning they were ready to fire rounds at a specified target. Yadao stopped the

clock: 22:49. The exercise was over.


Btry. B didn’t meet the time standard, but the battery’s performance was still something to be proud of, said battalion commander LTC Wilson Shoffner.

“I saw discipline. I saw hustle. Everything was just clicking,” he said. Then he threw down the challenge. “Next time, 15 minutes.” 

➤ SSG Antonio Alvarado uses his knife to begin removing the cushioning that protected a 105mm howitzer during its drop and landing.

▼ Artillerymen continue to arrive by parachute as other Soldiers rush to prepare a howitzer for firing.



A full-page photograph showing a worker in a dark blue hazmat suit and hood, wearing gloves, operating a piece of equipment with a yellow hose. The worker is positioned on the right side of the frame. In the foreground, there are several wooden pallets stacked with cylindrical metal drums. The drums have markings such as "PD 150-131-130C" and "NEW YORK NY". The background is a light-colored, possibly metallic, structure. The overall scene is an industrial or military facility for handling hazardous materials.

"We've overcome many obstacles to reach this 50-percent milestone and are on the downhill slope moving closer to the overall goal of getting rid of all the chemical weapons in the U.S. stockpile."

Eliminating Chemical Weapons

Story by Argie Sarantinos-Perrin



All photos courtesy CMA



▲ Canisters of chemical munitions await processing at a disposal site.

THE U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency has been safely eliminating America's stockpile of chemical weapons since 1990, and has reached a milestone with the destruction of half of its stockpile of chemical munitions. This accounts for more than 1.7 million munitions in the original stockpile.

"We've overcome many obstacles to reach this 50-percent milestone and are on the downhill slope moving closer to the overall goal of getting rid of all of the chemical weapons in the U.S. stockpile," said Kevin Flamm, program manager for elimination of chemical weapons.

The United States produced a variety of chemical weapons from World War I through 1973 in an effort to deter other countries from using chemical weapons on U.S. troops. The most common agents the Army made were the mustard blister agent and two nerve agents, sarin — also known as (GB) — and VX. Mustard agent produces severe burns and can be fatal, while sarin and VX are potent nerve agents that can kill within minutes by attacking the central nervous system.

Argie Sarantinos-Perrin works for URS Coleman under contract with the Chemical Materials Agency.

◀ Workers prepare a pallet of M-55 VX nerve-agent filled rockets for transport from the chemical agent storage area to a nearby disposal facility for destruction.



▲ The Deseret Chemical Depot in Utah is also home to a chemical weapons disposal facility.

Although commonly referred to as gasses — because during World War I some chemical weapons were dispersed as vapors — these agents are liquids, each with different physical characteristics.

In the early 1970s the Army began researching ways to safely eliminate the national stockpile to reduce the risks associated with aging weapons. During this time the Army destroyed some of its chemical weapons by incinerating and neutralizing them.

Current efforts to eliminate the

U.S. stockpile began in 1986 when Congress required the safe destruction of the entire stockpile, in keeping with a law that predates the Chemical Weapons Convention by more than a decade. Two years later, in 1988, the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program was formed to better prepare nearby civilian communities for any potential chemical-stockpile accident.

By teaming the Army and the Department of Homeland Security, CSEPP pro-

vides funding for chemical-accident response equipment and warning systems. It also oversees yearly community-wide emergency preparedness exercises at all of the stockpile sites, and works with communities to provide training that will help residents respond appropriately to a chemical-stockpile incident.

America's 1997 ratification of the CWC provided additional impetus for the destruction program. As a signatory, the United States agreed to comply with requirements to stop producing, stockpiling or transferring chemical weapons, and also agreed to do its part to eliminate the entire chemical-weapon stockpiles of all signatory nations. As of 2006 officials of more than 170 countries had signed the treaty.

In 1990 the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System, the U.S. Army's first disposal facility, began disposing of the U.S. chemical-weapon stockpile stored on the island, which is about 800 miles southwest of Hawaii.

The pilot facility completed its mission in 2000 after eliminating the more than 412,000 chemical weapons stored on the island. Today, Johnston Atoll is a wildlife refuge, provid-

ing habitat for endangered and threatened waterfowl and marine species.

Another



“We remain dedicated to eliminating the national stockpile while protecting our communities.”

chemical-stockpile site, CMA’s disposal facility at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., completed disposal of the entire Edgewood Area mustard-agent stockpile in 2006.

This was the first facility within the continental United States to completely destroy its stockpile.


Other states with chemical-weapon stockpiles and accompanying disposal facilities include Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Oregon and Utah. In addition, weapons are also stockpiled in Kentucky and Colorado, where disposal facilities are in the design phase as Department of Defense disposal projects.

“With our teams working across the country, we are able to move forward, knowing that we will reach 100 percent destruction in a safe and environmentally sound way. We remain dedicated to eliminating the national stockpile while protecting our communities,” said CMA Director Michael Parker.

Parker said not only does CMA have the chemical-weapon storage and disposal mission, but at the Pine Bluff Arsenal in Arkansas CMA provides specialized products and services that support Soldiers. The arsenal produc-

es, renovates and stores more than 60 types of special conventional ammunition products.

These products include munitions for smoke, non-lethal, riot control, incendiary, illumination and infrared uses. PBA is also the only facility in the Western Hemisphere with the capability to fill white-phosphorous munitions.

The remaining U.S. chemical-weapon stockpile includes bombs, rockets, mortars, projectiles, land mines and spray tanks filled with blister agent or one of the nerve agents. 

➤ Technicians involved in the destruction of chemical weapons wear protective ensemble suits that weigh almost 75 pounds.



➤ Chemical weapons are carefully unloaded from on-site containers in the Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility’s depot unpack area.

➤ Johnston Atoll, site of the nation’s first chemical weapons disposal facility, is now a wildlife refuge that provides pristine habitat for many species.



TROOPS BENEFIT FROM LIGHT-WEIGHT MINE-PROTECTED FASTENERS

ARIZONA-based ArmorWorks has received a Small Business Innovation Research award from the U.S. Army Tank and Automotive Command to develop a high-performance, lightweight fastening system to attach blast-protection kits to vehicles.

Currently, industrial bolts are used to attach blast-protection appliqué to vehicles.

Under severe blast conditions, such as an improvised explosive device, these bolts can break off, causing secondary fragments which may hit the vehicle and crew.

This award allows ArmorWorks to develop a system that will prevent injuries to U.S. troops. — *ArmorWorks Public Relations*



Lightweight Mine-Protected Fasteners



For more information, visit www.armorworks.com.

HEARING HELP FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

TRICARE covers hearing aids and services for active-duty family members diagnosed with “profound” hearing loss. Only active-duty family members who meet specific hearing-loss criteria are eligible for this benefit.

The TRICARE Management Activity is a Defense agency that administers the health-care plan for the uniformed services, retirees and their families, serving more than 9 million beneficiaries worldwide.

— *TRICARE Public Affairs Office*

To view their fact sheet on the hearing aid program, visit

www.tricare.osd.mil/Factsheets/viewfactsheet.cfm?id=349.

T R I C A R E

SUICIDE-PREVENTION CONFERENCE

THE Department of Defense Fifth Annual Suicide Prevention Conference will be held March 5 to 8 at The Seminole Hard Rock Hotel in Hollywood, Fla.

This year's conference theme is "The Force of Caring: Promoting Collaboration and Integration in Suicide Prevention." All of the military services will be represented.

Attendees will include suicide-prevention program managers; behavioral-health professionals and technicians; counselors; chaplains and chaplain assistants; unit suicide-prevention officers; members of installation suicide-prevention committees; health-promotion professionals; substance-abuse professionals; com-

For more information on the conference visit www.ha.osd.mil/2007mspc/ or call (703) 681-1698.



mand and unit leaders involved in suicide prevention; and public-affairs professionals.

Sponsored by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, there is no registration fee. — ASDHA PAO

MOAA COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN

THE Military Officers Association of America will offer the Vanguard 529 College Savings Plan to officers and enlisted military personnel, to provide them with a low-cost way to save for a child's college education.

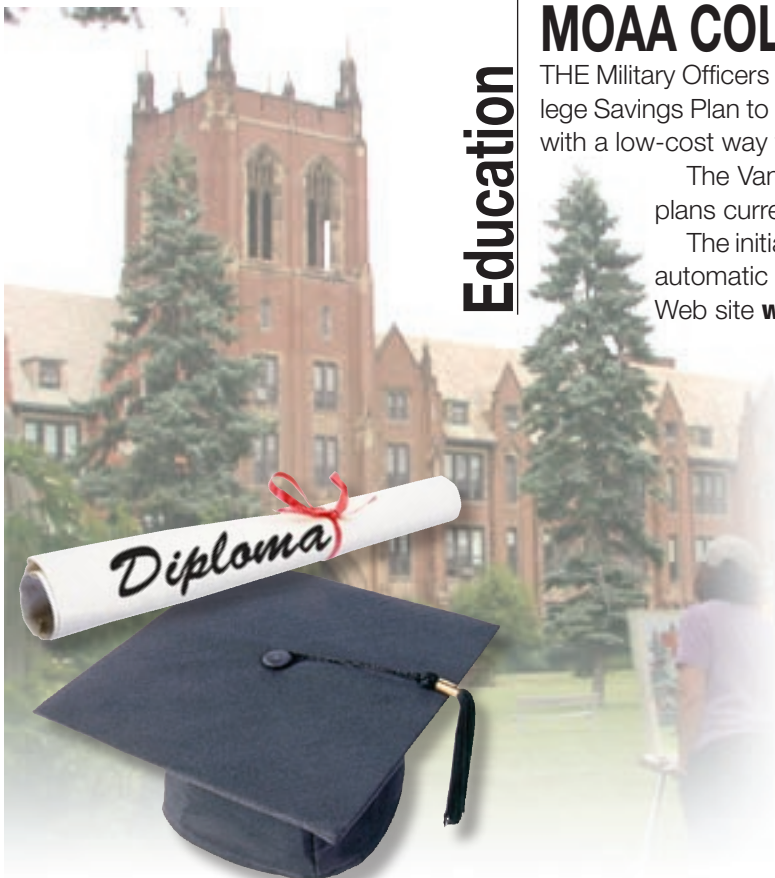
The Vanguard 529 Plan is one of the lowest-cost 529 savings plans currently available.

The initial minimum investment is only \$50 when establishing an automatic investment plan and applying online through MOAA's Web site www.moaa.org/529.

If the automatic investment plan is not chosen, the minimum investment is \$3,000.

Investments in the Vanguard 529 Plan can be used to pay for an education at state and private colleges, universities and other educational institutions.

Withdrawals from the plan are free from federal income taxes when used for qualified higher-education expenses. Certain states also allow for contributions to the Vanguard 529 to be deducted from state income taxes. MOAA members in Nevada, Pennsylvania, Maine and Kansas can take advantage of this additional benefit. — MOAA



THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN **BENEFITS SOLDIERS**

MORE service members should take advantage of the Thrift Savings Plan because it's an investment option with unique benefits for military members, according to MAJ John Johnson, director of the Armed Forces Tax Council.

Money contributed to the account is deducted from the person's gross taxable income before taxes are deducted. TSP is also a tax-deferred family of funds, and earnings aren't taxed until withdrawn at retirement. This represents a significant savings over the years, Johnson said.

As of this year, the amount military members may contribute to TSP is unlimited. The only limit is the Internal Revenue Service's \$15,000 per-year limit on contributions to tax-deferred accounts.

TSP is not like a savings account, and the money con-



tributed to it should be money people aren't going to need soon. However, TSP does have a loan program for situations such as a first home purchase, where participants can borrow money from their own accounts and then pay it back at a market interest rate.

After leaving the military, service members cannot continue contributing to TSP unless they take a federal job. They can leave their money in TSP, though, and continue to draw returns on it. The money in TSP can also be rolled over to another IRA account, Johnson said.

Service members may sign up for TSP online at www.tsp.gov. The site offers all the tools troops need to get started in the program and manage their accounts. — *Army News Service*

ARMY **ACCEPTS** NEWEST HELICOPTER

GEN Richard A. Cody, vice chief of staff of the Army, recently officially accepted the Army's first UH-72A Lakota light utility helicopter.

The helicopter will primarily be used by the National Guard in support of homeland-security missions. The Guard will receive the majority of the 322 new aircraft, which will replace UH-60 Black Hawks in certain missions.

The UH-72A is a commercial aircraft that will be used to conduct light general support tasks in non-combat environments, such as civil search and rescue, personnel recovery, evacuation, counter-drug and limited civil command-and-control operations in the conduct of homeland security. — *ARNEWS*



ARMY INITIATES EW CAPABILITY

THE Army is developing a new core competency for career Soldiers and officers interested in becoming electronic warfare specialists.

This effort proved to be such a combat multiplier that, in April 2006, the Army established the Electronic Warfare Division as part of the Army Asymmetric Warfare Office.

The EWD's mission is to oversee electronic-warfare policy, programs and resources within the Army.

In May 2006 the vice chief of staff of the Army directed the G-3 to establish electronic warfare as an enduring core warfighting competency within the Army.

The Army is planning the development of a military occupational specialty and an officer career field. These Soldiers are already embedded in units and preparing to go to Iraq and Afghanistan to do "battle hand-off" with the Navy electronic-warfare officers on the ground.

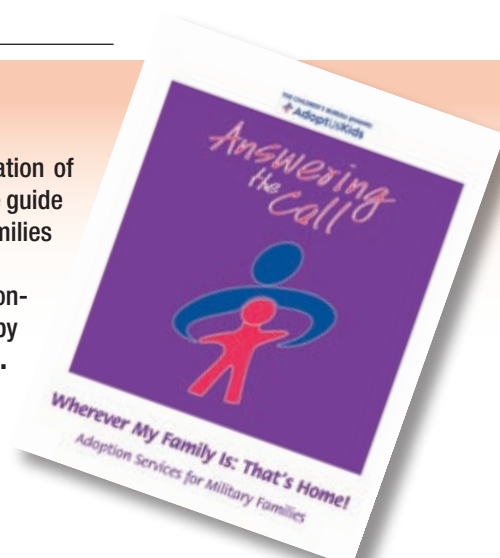
One of the greatest emerging warfighting domains is the electromagnetic spectrum, the largely invisible space over which radio waves, light waves and directed energy can travel. The Army has long used systems which depend upon the spectrum for communications; radars; targeting; laser and radio-frequency guided munitions; global-positioning systems; blue-force trackers; and other sensors for collecting intelligence and information. — *ARNEWS*



NEW GUIDE ON ADOPTION SERVICES

THE Department of Health and Human Services recently announced the publication of "Wherever My Family Is: That's Home! Adoption Services for Military Families." The guide highlights adoption practices that can help to minimize the obstacles military families face when attempting to become foster or adoptive parents.

The guide is designed for social-work practitioners and for military families contemplating adoption or foster parenting. Copies of the guide may be obtained by calling (888) 200-4005 or through the association's Web site at www.adoptuskids.org/images/resourceCenter/militaryGuide.pdf — *ARNEWS*



THIS IS OUR ARMY



SOLDIERS is proud to present This Is Our Army 2007, a story in pictures of the Soldiers, family members and civilians who — at home and abroad — are training, maintaining the peace, managing the complexities of running Army communities or raising Army families.

We thank the photographers who captured these images, which allow a glimpse into the daily lives of the men and women of America's Army.

- LTC Larry L. Cottle, a member of the Army Reserve's 3rd Corps Support Command, headquartered in Des Moines, Iowa, is reunited with his daughters at Volk Field, Wis., upon his redeployment from supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. — *Loni C. Witscheber*
- Soldiers from the 7th Army Reserve Command's Color Guard perform during a ceremony on Veteran's Day weekend at Brookwood American Military Cemetery near Guildford, England. — *SSG Osvaldo Sanchez*







- SPC Phillip P. Rodriguez of the 287th Signal Company, 78th Signal Battalion, at Camp Zama, Japan, knocks out his last push-up before time expires during the Army Physical Fitness test for the U.S. Army, Japan, Soldier of the year competition board at the Zama High School track. — *Kiyoshi Tokeshi.*



- ◀ Soldiers of the Army Reserve's 108th Division (Institutional Training), headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., walk single-file to their aircraft at Volk Field, Wis., in preparation for a deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. — *Loni C. Witscheber*

- Wearing a reproduction post-Civil War NCO uniform, MAJ Andy Johnson greets his wife, Janine, as he finishes giving a tour at the Fort Leavenworth, Kan., National Cemetery and she arrives from her portrayal at the installation's Homes Tour. — *Prudence Siebert*



- ▼ SPC Joel Gideon, a contestant in a Soldier-of-the-year competition at the Devens Reserve Forces Training Area in Massachusetts, engages targets on the installation's automated range. — *Linda A. Jeleniewski*



- ▼ While a jumbled mix of neighborhood children scream "Mom," MAJ Shelia Hicks searches for her children during the "Mommy Call" game at her Fort Leavenworth neighborhood's Family Olympics. — *Prudence Siebert*





▲ Service members and other Bataan Memorial Death March participants shake hands with Bataan Death March survivors before setting off on the 15-mile race at White Sands Missile Range, N.M. — 2LT Heath Jenni





◀ MAJ Gerdardo J. Morales of Headquarters and HQs. Company, I Corps, Fort Lewis, Wash., polishes his boots at Camp Kengun, Japan, during the 49th annual Yama Sakura exercise. — *Luis Casale*

▼ SPC Tiffany Chagdes is assisted by PFC Elaniea Kelly (at right) both of the 526th Military Police Co. as Chagdes is tackled by children at Kids Connection in Leavenworth, Kan. — *Prudence Siebert*



▲ SFC James Lee Nagle Jr. of the 78th Signal Battalion helps his son, Alex, climb the rock wall as part of Cherry Blossom Festival activities at Camp Zama. — *Kiyoshi Tokeshi*



◀ SSG Demetric Tucker of Fort Benning, Ga., nears the end of the 20-kilometer road march during the Combined Arms Center NCO and Soldier of the Year competition at Fort Leavenworth. — *Prudence Siebert*

▶ A Warrior Leader Course student participates in a situational training exercise on the South Post of Fort McCoy, Wis. The course was taught by the 84th USARRTC Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Fort McCoy. — *Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt*

◀ Special Reaction Team Training Course (Phase 1) students enter a bus during a bus-assault exercise at the old U.S. Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth. The students cleared the bus, secured and covered the bus exterior, and set up and monitored a containment area during the drill. — *Prudence Siebert*

▶ Mike Ressel of Fort McCoy's Range Maintenance Office uses an end loader to smooth gravel for a road to new targets on a multipurpose machine-gun range. — *Rob Schuette*





▲ SGT Federico Alveraz of the 78th Aviation Battalion at Camp Zama inspects his UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter before take off from Camp Zama's airfield. — *Edward Johnson*



▲ Army Reserve military police Soldiers stand with New South Wales Governor Marie Bashir while visiting Australia for that country's Reserve Forces Day events and training. — *SSG Nate Orme*

► Warrior Leader Course students move out on a mission during a situational training exercise at Fort McCoy. — *Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt*





▲ Physicians and nurses of the 21st Combat Support Hospital, an active-duty unit headquartered at Fort Hood, Texas, perform mock surgery on a detainee role player in the operating room of the Medical Tactical Training Base during a mass-casualty exercise at Fort McCoy. — *Loni C. Witscheber*

➤ Members of the 452nd Combat Support Hospital practice removing “injured” litter patients from a UH-1V helicopter during the mass-casualty exercise during extended combat training at Fort McCoy. — *Rob Schuette*





▲ Soldiers with the Army Reserve's 108th Division (Institutional Training) assemble for a group picture upon the completion of their departure ceremony at Fort McCoy.
— Loni C. Witscheber

◀ SSG Tara Abrams attaches a battle streamer to the flag of U.S. Army, Japan, during a ceremony at Camp Zama.
— Yuichi Imada



▲ SSG Todd R. Olig of the Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, headquartered in Appleton, Wis., hugs his daughters upon his return from supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. — Loni C. Witscheber

➤ LTC Irene Parrish, commander of Fort McCoy's Troop Medical Clinic, checks SGT Mikal Bell of the 7212th Medical Support Unit for signs of an upper respiratory infection. The checkup is part of care given to mobilized and deploying Soldiers to ensure they can perform their duties. — Rob Schuette





◀ U.S. Command and General Staff College students stand in formation as the last international military students post their flags in Abrams Loop at Fort Leavenworth. — *Prudence Siebert*

▶ Led by SFC Omar Rich, members of the joint-services color guard present the colors at the Memorial Day ceremony at Leavenworth National Cemetery. — *Tisha Johnson*



◀ Members of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force discuss strategies with American Soldiers during Exercise Yama Sakura. — *Kiyoshi Tokeshi*

▼ SPC Phillip Rodriguez of the 78th Avn. Regt. stands on the deck of the USS *Blue Ridge* during deck-landing training for his unit's aviators. — *Ed Johnson*



▲ SSG Dwayne Simmons of U.S. Army, Japan's, 296th Army Band, plays a saxophone solo during a jazz concert, part of the Cherry Blossom Festival at Camp Zama. — *Kiyoshi Tokeshi*



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ARMY RESERVE



Jason McCarthy, Construction Job Site Supervisor and Sergeant in the U.S. Army Reserve.
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